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Globalization and interdependence: international migration and development

Note verbale dated 8 May 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations has the honour to present a thematic recollection from the Global Forum on Migration and Development covering the period 2007-2012 (see annex).

In accordance with paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 67/219, the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations would be grateful if you would circulate the present note verbale and its annex as a document of the General Assembly under the relevant item. The document would be presented at the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly on 3 and 4 October 2013.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 8 May 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Thematic recollection from the Global Forum on Migration and Development (2007-2012): input to the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

Introduction to the Global Forum on Migration and Development

1. Now in its seventh year, the Global Forum on Migration and Development has emerged as a distinctive, comprehensive and global platform for dialogue and cooperation on international migration and development, which is both policy- and practice-oriented. Following the 2006 General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, the Global Forum has opened up a space for informal and voluntary dialogue among Governments on current and emerging migration and development issues. That process has, over time, built trust among all participants through dialogue focusing on the sharing of experiences and highlighting examples of policies and practices. The Global Forum process brings together Government representatives with the agencies of the Global Migration Group and other international organizations, civil society and the private sector, and encourages exchange with regional consultative processes and other relevant platforms.

2. In Belgium (2007), the Philippines (2008), Greece (2009), Mexico (2010), Switzerland (2011) and Mauritius (2012), more than 160 Governments have taken part in the annual meetings of the Global Forum. Each year, round-table discussions have been organized around central themes proposed by the host Governments and supported by the participating States. Through dialogue and partnerships, Governments and other stakeholders have learned from each other in order to maximize the development benefits from migration and minimize its negative implications, especially for migrants. In essence, those discussions have explored the links between migration and human development with a view to enlarging people's choices and building human capabilities. A common understanding has emerged that migration is a reality that needs to be addressed at the national, regional and global levels with a coherent and collaborative approach.

3. The discussions and outcomes have been wide-ranging, cross-cutting and cross-fertilizing. Various aspects of development, including poverty reduction, health, education, gender and environment, have been touched upon with a particular focus on how migration has made a difference in those areas. The Global Forum on Migration and Development has systematically made efforts to strengthen the development perspective of its work.

4. Drawing on the titles of each Global Forum round table and the outcomes and recommendations the issues raised can mainly be clustered around the following subject matters: strategies for minimizing costs/maximizing human development; labour migration and mobility; diasporas; remittances; strategies for addressing irregular migration and enabling regular migration; the rights of migrants; policy coherence and mainstreaming; data and research, governance of migration and

coordination of dialogue and civil society and the private sector.[1] Those issues show the substantive relevance of the work of the Global Forum for the upcoming 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. In order to inform the High-level Dialogue of the deliberations to date, the present document thus gives a factual summary of the main outcomes of the Global Forum process.

Brief overview of the chairmanships of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, 2007-2012

5. In this section, a short summary of each chairmanship of the Global Forum on Migration and Development is presented in order to highlight the main issues that have been discussed during the six years of the Forum's existence. Given the voluntary nature of the Global Forum, the role of the Chairs has been instrumental to the Forum's progress.

Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Brussels in 2007[2]

6. The main goal of the meeting was to examine the impact of migration on social and economic development, in terms of human capital development and labour mobility on the one hand and the contribution of migrant resources (financial and skills) on the other hand. Policy coherence between migration and development policies was the second main issue. Human rights, gender and root causes of migration were mainstreamed as horizontal issues across all round tables. The meeting established the unique Global Forum practice of team-based preparations of round tables and set in place the Forum's Focal Point network to help to coordinate the engagement of Member States and observers. Operating modalities were established to create a structured framework that would guarantee the continuation of the Forum.

Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Manila in 2008[3]

7. The Chairmanship revolved around the central theme, "Protecting and empowering migrants for development". One of the issues addressed under the Chairmanship of the Philippines was the importance of protecting the rights of migrants, not because the latter contribute to economic development, but because migrants have rights and States have the duty to promote and protect those rights. That duty is a shared responsibility between countries of origin and destination. Migrants were best able to contribute to development in both countries of origin and destination when they were protected and empowered socially, economically and in terms of their basic human rights. The Global Forum on Migration and Development addressed for the first time the issue of irregular migration in the development context. Governments also agreed to establish a support unit, to provide basic administrative, financial and logistical services to the Chair-in-Office. Two ad hoc working groups were also formed to facilitate follow-up and thematic continuity between the annual Forum meetings.

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[1] These thematic issues are further elaborated below and are indexed in the enclosure.

[2] See www.gfmd.org/en/meetings/2007.

[3] See www.gfmd.org/en/meetings/2008.

Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Athens in 2009[4]

8. The overarching theme for the 2009 meeting of the Global Forum was "Integrating migration policies into development strategies for the benefit of all". The selection of that theme was based both on the diverse Greek experiences of migration and a growing global awareness of the need to better link migration to development and to make it a force for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. During that Chairmanship one pivotal issue discussed was the "integration-reintegration development link", which explored the positive impact of migrants' integration and reintegration on development activities in source countries at the individual and/or collective level (co-development). Gender was addressed as a horizontal issue across all round tables, drawing attention to the feminization of migration in relation to challenges, problems and advantages both for migrants and for source and receiving countries as well. It was agreed that both of those focus issues contributed to migrants' empowerment and were closely linked with the protection of their rights.

Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, in 2010[5]

9. The central theme of the Chairmanship of Mexico was "Partnerships for migration and human development: shared prosperity, shared responsibility". It focused on the concept of partnerships and highlighted the importance of the cooperation of all stakeholders to meet the challenges, which the link between migration and development posed for countries of origin, transit and destination. It promoted the creation of new constructive forms of communication with civil society and with international organizations and introduced the Common Space Format of debates in plenary between Governments and civil society. In the course of the process, countries expressed their interest and commitment in making the Forum a useful tool to develop initiatives and projects, and an important reference in the planning of public policy. Round tables focused on irregular migration, family, gender, human development and climate change. They also included a working session on the platform for partnerships, a support mechanism to facilitate partnerships on current and past Global Forum outcomes and follow-up activities.

Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Geneva in 2011[6]

10. The overarching theme of the Chairmanship of Switzerland was "Taking action on migration and development — coherence capacity and cooperation". The work programme was structured under three clusters (labour mobility and development; addressing irregular migration through coherent migration and development strategies; and tools for evidence-based migration and development policies) and provided a space for a series of 14 focused and action-oriented meetings around the world. By zooming into local and regional contexts, the Global Forum benefited from concrete experiences of migration and development practitioners on the ground. The collection of insights was reported to the global level in a concluding

[4] See www.gfmd.org/en/meetings/2009.
[5] See www.gfmd.org/en/meetings/2010.
[6] See www.gfmd.org/en/meetings/2011.

meeting held in Geneva. The 2011 meeting also successfully completed the first phase of the Global Forum assessment exercise, which examined the way in which the Forum operated as a process, including its structures, the impact and relevance of its outcomes and its relationship with other stakeholders.

Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Port Louis in 2012[7]

11. The central theme for the Chairmanship was "Enhancing the human development of migrants and their contribution to the development of communities and States". The Chair placed emphasis on achievable outcomes for migrants and their families, and for the Forum's future; the unique needs and challenges of Africa; and engaging civil society, the diaspora and the private sector. It addressed those objectives through the round-table themes of labour mobility, mainstreaming migration into development planning and migrant protection; and through the panel discussions of the common space, which was expanded into interactive break-out sessions. A new humanitarian element was introduced to the Global Forum through the common space theme of migrants in distress. At the 2012 meeting, participants also successfully completed the second phase of the Global Forum assessment exercise and presented a consolidated assessment report with recommendations guided by three commonly agreed objectives: consolidation of the Forum, enhancing the Forum's impact on the global migration and development agenda; and ensuring the Forum's sustainability. Those recommendations were adopted at the Forum meeting in Port Louis and the report will be submitted to the High-level Dialogue 2013 for information.

Overview of subject matter discussions, outcomes and recommendations

12. The annual meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development mentioned above have included a total of 46 round tables, resulting in more than 250 recommendations and other types of outcomes. The enclosure to the present document provides an overview of the round tables.[8] Drawing on the subject matters listed in the introduction, the deliberations from the first six chairmanships of the Forum can be illustrated by the examples of issues summarized below.

Strategies for minimizing costs/maximizing human development

13. Almost all of the Global Forum round tables over the years have highlighted various links between migration and development. A few round tables have been specifically dedicated to issues of minimizing the costs of migration and maximizing the human development of migration. Those round tables have highlighted the importance of applying a broad human development perspective by focusing on the individual migrants, their well-being and various ways to reduce costs and risks.

[7] See www.gfmd.org/en/meetings/2012.

[8] Information on the proceedings and recommendations arising from the annual meetings is available from www.gfmd.org, under "Documents library".

Labour migration and mobility

14. The broad issues of labour migration and mobility have consistently been on the agenda of the Global Forum, and a number of policies and practices have been documented. One area of discussion has been policies aimed at enhancing the development effect of temporary migration, while acknowledging limitations of some schemes and the importance of safeguarding the rights of migrants. Outcomes have related to enabling safe and orderly temporary labour migration, policies to better manage human resource development, and deployment in highly skilled sectors. Specific recommendations have included a compendium on good practice of bilateral labour arrangements; codes of ethical recruitment; studies on low-cost loans for migrants, regulating migrant worker recruitment, social protection for temporary migrant workers, migrant resource centres; and a checklist to protect and support migrant domestic workers. With reference to circular migration, outcomes have included exploring and identifying legal frameworks that enable mobility and the impact of skills circulation models, establishing databases on circular migration programmes and improving policies for skills development and skills recognition as well as policies and programmes for returning migrants. It has been recognized that there remains a lack of gender-sensitive policies related to circular migration and its potential for development.

15. In order to draw on the contribution of other-than-government actors in this area, especially the private sector, one key issue has been exploring models of partnerships with banks and non-governmental programmes to reduce the cost of pre-departure loans to migrants to reduce the transaction cost of mobility. Another issue that has been explored is the involvement of private sector actors in labour market planning. Those discussions have resulted in development of good recruitment and employment practices in partnership with recruitment agents and employers. For example, that has led to benchmarks and criteria for performance being set up, and, in some instances, monitoring and licensing systems for recruiters and other intermediaries. Initiatives have also been explored with a view to better preparing overseas contract workers, and training the local workforce. Other outcomes have focused on incentives for companies to invest or engage in community-based programmes in countries of origin to provide employment opportunities for returning migrants.

Diasporas

16. Through the Global Forum, Governments have also explored how to work with diaspora communities as agents for development, and have included diaspora entrepreneurs in the common space discussions. Policies have been explored on how to engage and empower migrants and diasporas to better contribute to development policies and programmes as well as facilitate their collective investments directly in the countries of origin. Those discussions have acknowledged that diaspora contributions are voluntary and often directed at an individual level — they cannot replace the responsibility of States at a community/country level. The contribution of diaspora communities to development in their countries of residence has also been highlighted as an important issue, often linked to public perceptions. A related topic that has gained attention is the role of migrants' associations. While the latter sometimes coincide with diaspora communities, in some instances they are open to people of different origins, and in other cases they are found in countries of origin, e.g., to engage with policies and prepare migrants for departure or return. A

handbook entitled "Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development" (International Organization for Migration; Migration Policy Institute, 2012) has been facilitated through the Global Forum Platform for Partnerships.

Remittances

17. Deliberations on remittances have focused on ways to improve the availability and quality of data and reduce transaction costs, partly by encouraging more transparency and competition in the market and by increasing the use of formal remittance channels. Discussions have highlighted concrete evidence on how remittances contribute to poverty reduction, although there remain challenges in terms of dependencies. Practices on how to facilitate productive investments and spending on health and education have been addressed. Policies that seek to increase the positive impact of remittances both on macro- and micro-level development have been explored.

Strategies for addressing irregular migration and enabling regular migration

18. Strategies for addressing irregular migration and enabling regular migration have been a recurring issue in Global Forum meetings and often discussed as two sides of the same coin. Deliberations have stressed that this is a shared responsibility between countries of origin, transit and destination.

19. On the one hand, the discussions have focused on how to expand options for regular migration, including necessary partnerships. Outcomes have included facilitating matching of available skills and jobs by compiling such information, promotion of cooperation mechanisms between countries of origin and destination as well as reviews of visa policies to facilitate regular migration.

20. On the other hand, joint strategies for addressing irregular migration, including smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, have been explored. Those discussions have included efforts to manage migration as well as to support development in countries of origin to reduce irregular migration by making migration a matter of choice, not necessity. While it has been recognized that irregular migrants also contribute to development, deliberations have highlighted the risks many migrants run into when they move, work or reside with an irregular status. Hence, in order to protect migrants, calls have been made for all countries to pursue common efforts to discourage and reduce irregular migration.

21. A related topic is making migration an informed choice by expanding the information available to migrants (pre-departure, pre-return/safe migration campaigns etc.). Examples include exploring possibilities for establishing migrant resource centres along well-traversed migration corridors, and strengthening networks between migrant resource centres in countries of origin and host countries.

The rights of migrants

22. The Global Forum has enabled a constructive dialogue on migrants' rights. Issues discussed have included the shared responsibility of protecting the rights of migrants, including the ratification of relevant United Nations conventions, the importance of promoting inclusion, protection and acceptance of migrants in host societies, including through empowerment of migrants. The issue of rights has been given a deeper meaning by looking beyond international conventions to also include

which social protection policies are in place for migrants. That has led to a promotion of the social and economic rights of migrants, the portability of pensions as well as to exploring different cost-effective health-care models as well as social security and end-of-contract payment models for migrant workers.

23. In order to avoid xenophobia and discrimination, efforts to promote inclusion and acceptance in host societies have been shared, including information campaigns directed to the public about migrants' contributions to development as well as good integration practices with a view to countering negative perceptions of, and attitudes towards, migrants.

24. Beyond that, the human rights of migrants have also been stressed in relation to enforcement of migration regulation. Those discussions have included calls to avoid the criminalization of migrants and recognition that enforcement and migrant protection objectives can be mutually reinforcing when prevention and enforcement measures are managed in full respect of fundamental human rights. That also includes ensuring the human rights of migrants while combating labour exploitation and human trafficking as well as protecting migrants during humanitarian crises. The gender and family perspectives of migration and development have also been discussed to examine their human development potential and impacts.

Policy coherence and mainstreaming

25. In terms of policy coherence and mainstreaming of migration, the focus within the Global Forum has been on promoting policy coherence between migration and development, with a view to mainstreaming migration into development policy and development into migration policy. On the one hand, those discussions have concerned institutional issues of finding the right structures and lines of communication within Governments and beyond in relation to other stakeholders (including the involvement of civil society); on the other hand, the discussions have focused on policy contents. Recommendations have included formulating national policy and action plans for how to promote the synergies between migration and development. Efforts have included mainstreaming migration into activities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals or other development initiatives, with the ultimate goal of including migration in broader national development planning processes and in the formulation of country strategies for bilateral development cooperation, as well as in sectoral planning.

26. Recently the issue of South-South migration and development policies was discussed in depth in the Global Forum process. The focus was on most recent data reflecting the full range of human mobility in the South-South context, including related drivers of such migration, harnessing the development potential of labour mobility among countries, governance capacity gaps and environment-induced migration.

27. A number of policy guidance tools have been developed, including tools for mainstreaming migration into development planning; a repository of migration profiles as well as the handbook, "Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development". In order to promote the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 development agenda, the Global Forum has pointed to the need of indicators to measure and monitor the concrete effects of migration on specific development outcomes (e.g., current Millennium Development Goals). One way of improving such data is by integrating migration questions into standard development surveys.

Data and research

28. Recognizing that there is a need for data and analysis to underpin coherence between migration and development policy and to convince policymakers more broadly, many of the deliberations on research have focused on assessing the effects of migration on development. Those deliberations have reviewed cause and effect relationships, data and research tools as well as impact assessments. Importantly, those discussions have stressed the need for improved impact assessments of policies, programmes and projects linking migration and development, e.g., migration mainstreaming initiatives as the outcomes of such assessment serve Governments in their continued efforts in this field.

29. Other discussions have emphasized the importance of enhancing the capacity, including of national statistics offices, on data and research, and to monitor migrant flows to and from developing countries; targeted research on the impacts of regular and irregular migration on developing countries with significant inward vs. outward migration flows; and improving knowledge about the diaspora.

Governance of migration and coordination of dialogues

30. A standing issue in Global Forum meetings has been the future of the Forum and the need to continue reviewing the progress and internal functioning of the Forum and suggesting improvements and progressive change for the way forward.[9]

31. On occasion, other issues related to global governance of migration have been addressed, including how to improve coordination and cooperation between the Global Forum and regional consultative processes as well as other regional and interregional forums, where relevant, as well as how these forums could incorporate the migration and development nexus. In such deliberations, links between the Global Forum and the Global Migration Group have also been addressed.

32. Cooperation and consultation with regional entities and international organizations, in particular those forming part of the Global Migration Group, have benefited the Global Forum through the provision of thematic expertise. A number of international organizations have also been engaged to assist Member States in voluntary follow-up of outcomes of the Forum.

Civil society and the private sector

33. The relations with civil society have evolved over time to allow more in-depth consultations through, e.g., the civil society days organized by civil society and common space, which provide a platform for Government and civil society to interact in Global Forum settings. Efforts have also been made to engage the private sector in dialogue through the Forum, e.g., by including high-level private sector representatives and members of the diaspora in the panels of Forum meetings.[10] A more meaningful engagement with the private sector, as with other stakeholders, has been identified as a priority for the years to come.

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[9] A comprehensive elaboration on recommended improvements can be found in the Consolidated Assessment report.

[10] One example of this was the thematic meeting entitled "Markets for migration and development", held in Berne under the Swiss Chairmanship of the meeting of the Forum held in 2011.

34. In order to draw on the contribution of other-than-government actors, in the area of labour migration, models of partnerships with banks and non-governmental programmes have been explored to reduce the cost of pre-departure loans to migrants and to reduce the transaction cost of mobility. Another issue that has been explored is the involvement of private sector actors in labour market planning. Those discussions have resulted in development of good recruitment and employment practices in partnership with recruitment agents and employers. For example, that has led to benchmarks and criteria for performance being set up, and, in some instances, monitoring and licensing systems for recruiters and other intermediaries. Initiatives have also been explored with a view to better preparing overseas contract workers and training the local workforce. Other recommendations have focused on incentives for companies to invest or engage in community-based programmes in countries of origin to provide employment opportunities for returning migrants.

Concluding remarks

35. The Global Forum on Migration and Development as a process is geared towards enabling dialogue and strengthening partnerships and cooperation on migration and development. The Forum has made annual progress by building upon the achievements of the previous year and introduced new means of promoting more effective dialogue and partnership between and among Governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector.

36. Since its inception, the Global Forum has helped to shape the global debate on migration and development by offering a space where Governments can discuss the multidimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges related to migration and its interlinkages with development. It has proved to be an innovative process for a holistic, frank and constructive dialogue among Governments, and between Governments and other relevant stakeholders, including international organizations, non-governmental organizations, migrants, the private sector and academia. Government teams have been established around each year's round-table themes, bringing together the experiences and expertise from different countries. As such, the Forum has built trust and enabled lesson-sharing and the establishment of partnerships. The informal character of the Global Forum and the rotating chairmanships have been seen to contribute to the advancement of the discussions.

37. The wealth of the above-mentioned deliberations, outcomes and recommendations points to the success of the Global Forum to enable constructive dialogue around issues pertaining to migration and development. As underscored in the recently concluded assessment of the first six years of the Forum, some 80 per cent of the respondents expressed great or general satisfaction with the Forum process, and an overwhelming majority of Governments considered that the process brought added value compared to other related forums.

38. The thematic recollection above indicates the capacity of the Global Forum to engage with, and contribute to, the focus issues identified in the four round-table sessions with the second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and

Development.[11] Additionally, the general sense of satisfaction with the Forum proves its relevance to the overall theme of the Dialogue, i.e., "Strengthening coherence and cooperation at all levels". From one year to the next, the Forum has successfully discussed in greater depth selected themes and identified new themes such as South-South migration, links between environmental change and migration, as well as the role of migration in the post-2015 development agenda. The substantive work conducted within the Forum since the Dialogue in 2006 bears witness to the ability of the Forum to address the evolving challenges and opportunities shaped by migration dynamics.

39. The Forum continues to be a dynamic and evolving process — a global platform that fosters practice- and policy-oriented dialogue, builds trust and partnerships among States, promotes sharing of knowledge and good practices, and reaches out to the broader international community in identifying joint, coherent and cooperative responses to current and future challenges in the field of migration and development.

[11] The four round tables of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development are: (a) Assessing the effects of international migration on sustainable development and identifying relevant priorities in view of the preparations of the post-2015 development framework; (b) Measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, with particular reference to women and children, as well as to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and to ensure orderly, regular and safe migration; (c) Strengthening partnerships and cooperation on international migration, mechanisms to effectively integrate migration into development policies and promote coherence at all levels; and (d) International and regional labour mobility and its impact on development.